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UNCLAS KINSHASA 000120

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [AORC](#) [ACABQ](#) [CG](#)
SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR DRC - SUSAN MCLURG

REF: USUN 68

¶1. Post grants country clearance and welcomes the visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo of Minister Counselor Susan McLurg, United States Mission to the United Nations, February 10 - 17, 2007 to participate in the UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

¶2. POINT OF CONTACT

Post understands from reftel that no assistance is requested and that the UN has made all arrangements for transport and accommodations. Should additional assistance be required, Embassy Point of Contact will be Political Officer Tracy Naber, who can be reached at:

Tracy Naber
Office Phone: 011-243-81-225-5872
Cell phone: 011-243-81-884-1354
IVG: 8-934-2620

¶3. VISA REQUIREMENTS

A valid Congolese visa is required of all American passport holders, whether diplomatic, official or tourist. Congolese visas cannot be issued at the airport.

¶4. FISCAL DATA REQUIREMENTS

No fiscal data need be provided. We understand from reftel that the United Nations will cover all costs of the visit.

¶5. ALL VISITS MUST COMMENCE IN KINSHASA

At the Ambassador's request, all visits to the Democratic Republic of Congo, which require country clearance, are to commence in Kinshasa, the country's capital. Travel to other regions of the country including the Kivus, Orientale and Maniema provinces, is to be undertaken from Kinshasa.

As requested, Post will not be making travel arrangements for Ms. McLurg.

¶6. AIRPORT ADVICE FOR ARRIVING PASSENGERS

Procedures at Ndjili Airport are changing as airport officials try to strengthen security procedures. At this time, expeditors are no longer allowed in the Arrivals Hall and can provide assistance only after travelers pass through Immigration control.

After deplaning and entering the Arrivals Hall, travelers should proceed to the "Official VIP/Diplomat" line, with passports and health certificates ready for presentation to the Immigration officials.

While at the airport, travelers are warned to not, repeat

not, pay money or give their documents to anyone other than the expeditor. This also applies to individuals in uniform, who may offer their services. Be polite but do not accept their assistance.

As requested, Post will not be providing expeditor assistance at the airport.

17. ACCOMODATIONS

As requested, Post will not be reserving accomodations for the traveler.

18. SECURITY

Kinshasa is a critical threat crime post. Although there is no specific threat targeting Americans, all visitors should remain vigilant and cautious during their stay in Kinshasa. The RSO advises that you exercise caution in the areas around hotels, and that you not travel after nightfall unless accompanied by someone familiar with the security situation in Kinshasa. TDY personnel should not use any form of local transportation and should refrain from displaying/using cameras in public.

A recent scam involves individuals in civilian clothes claiming to be Congolese police/security officials who approach unsuspecting expatriates on the street and demand to see their passport or other identification documents. They try and convince the would-be victim to get in their unmarked vehicle and accompany them to the local police precinct. If you are on the street and approached by someone claiming to be a police or security official, identify yourself as a diplomat working at the U.S. Embassy, walk briskly away, and make sure to report the incident to the RSO or Post One as soon as you have access to a phone. Do not approach or get in their vehicle.

19. CURRENCY

The use of dollars in the DRC is legal and acceptable for most transactions. Travelers arriving in the DRC with more than USD 10,000 must fill out a currency declaration. Travelers departing the DRC are not allowed to take out more than USD 10,000 in cash.

Please note that ATMs are not available in Congo. However, USG personnel are authorized USD and Franc Congolais accommodation exchange at the Embassy and/or USAID cashier; personal or travelers' checks are acceptable. Most personnel use Franc Congolais only for small purchases and tips.

American Express, Visa, Master Card, and Diner's Club are accepted in payment of bills at Kinshasa's two major hotels. However, very few other businesses in the Congo accept credit cards and their use outside of the major hotels is discouraged. Cashing travelers checks outside the Embassy is generally not advised because banks charge substantial fees for cashing them; travelers checks are rarely accepted at all outside of Kinshasa.

110. MEDICAL

Access to the Embassy Health Unit is available for US citizen, direct-hire USG employees and their eligible family members. If you have been or will be posted more than 60 days overseas in a calendar year (not necessarily consecutive), you must provide proof of a Department of State medical clearance from M/MED to qualify for access to the our Health Unit. Official visitors who are overseas less than 60 days in a calendar year are not required to have medical clearance and are authorized emergency, but not routine, use of the Health Unit.

Other official visitors may receive Health Unit services if they meet the following criteria: 1) an individual employment

relationship with the USG, 2) a MED Washington clearance, and 3) a USG agency that guarantees payment for medical expenses and/or personal overseas health and medevac insurance. Visitors without Health Unit access will be referred to a local medical clinic, which provides all emergency and non-routine medical care for Embassy employees and family members.

MALARIA: Congo is a malaria-affected area. All travelers should consult with medical personnel and take malaria prophylactics as appropriate, before arriving in Kinshasa.

YELLOW FEVER: You must have a valid yellow fever vaccination and your yellow vaccination card when you arrive. You may be charged a fine of \$50-\$100 without proof of vaccination.

¶11. You may visit the Embassy's Intranet website at <http://kinshasa.state.gov>. While still under construction, information is being added daily that you may find useful.

¶12. Have a good trip.

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